

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A distributed computing system achieves a highly distributed environment where very large computation intensive tasks are broken down into thousands of sub-tasks and then distributed to thousands of clients running on a variety of computers across the Internet. The idle CPU time of each of these thousands of client computers is used to perform these computations by running custom application modules in a low priority. A task server keeps track of information associated with each of the clients and uses the information to assign one or more tasks associated with a computing problem to each client computer. A file server provides the application modules to the client computers for executing their assigned tasks. An application server provides input data for the application modules and receives output data from the application modules. Status and performance information for machines, accounts and teams is collected by the task server and displayed on a background page of each client. Incentives for commitments of computing time are provided to users of potential client computers.